

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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November 19, 2001

**Wed 17a**

TO: COMMISSIONERS AND INTERESTED PERSONS

FROM: DEBORAH N. LEE, SOUTH COAST DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
SHERILYN SARB, DISTRICT MANAGER, SAN DIEGO DISTRICT  
DAVID STAHL, COASTAL PLANNER, SAN DIEGO DISTRICT

SUBJECT: **Staff Recommendation on San Diego Unified Port District Port Master Plan Amendment No. 30 (National City Distribution Center).** For Commission consideration and possible action at the Meeting of December 11-14, 2001.

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**SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff is recommending that the Commission approve the proposed amendment transferring approximately 22.14 acres of land into the Port Master Plan. The new land area is located south of West 24<sup>th</sup> St., between Tidelands Ave and Harrison in the City of National City and would be designated as "Marine-Related Industrial". No adverse environmental impacts to coastal resources are expected to result from the proposed amendment. The site is currently improved with approximately 332,000 sq. ft. of warehouse and office developments, with on-site parking. The acquisition of this site by the Port is intended to offset the loss of land area designated for marine-related industrial uses on the Campbell Shipyard & Fifth Avenue landing leaseholds (PMPA #31) and the South Bay Boatyard (PMPA#32) also on the Commission's December 2001 meeting agenda.

The appropriate motion and resolution can be found on Page 2. The main findings for approval of the amendment as submitted begin on Page 2.

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**Port Master Plan Amendment Procedure.** California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 13636 calls for port master plan amendments to be certified in the same manner as provided in Section 30714 of the Coastal Act for certification of port master plans. Section 13628 of the Regulations states that, upon the determination of the Executive Director that the master plan amendment and accompanying materials required by Section 13628(a) are sufficient, the master plan amendment shall be deemed submitted to the Commission for purposes of Section 30714 of the Coastal Act. The subject amendment was deemed submitted on June 15, 2001. Within 90 days after this submittal date, the Commission, after public hearing, shall certify or reject the amendment, in

whole or in part. However, on June 14, 2001, the Board of Port Commissioners waived the 90-day time period

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**I. PORT MASTER PLAN SUBMITTAL - RESOLUTIONS**

Following a public hearing, staff recommends the Commission adopt the following resolution and findings. The appropriate motion to introduce the resolution and a staff recommendation are provided just prior to the resolution.

**RESOLUTION I** (Resolution to approve certification of Port of San Diego Master Plan Amendment No. 30)

**MOTION:**     *I move that the Commission certify the Port of San Diego Master Plan Amendment No. 30 (National City Distribution Center).*

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends a **YES** vote and the adoption of the following resolution and findings. An affirmative vote by a majority of the Commissioners present is needed to pass the motion.

**Certification of Amendment**

The Commission hereby certifies San Diego Unified Port District Master Plan Amendment No. 30, and finds, for the reasons discussed below, that the amended Port Master Plan conforms with and carries out the policies of Chapter 8 of the Coastal Act. The Commission further finds that the plan amendment will not have any significant adverse impacts on the environment within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because either 1) feasible mitigation measures and/or alternatives have been incorporated to substantially lessen any significant adverse effects of the amendment on the environment, or 2) there are no further feasible alternatives and mitigation measures that would substantially lessen any significant adverse impacts on the environment that will result from certification of the port master plan amendment.

**II. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS.**

The Commission finds and declares as follows:

**A. Previous Commission Action.** The Commission certified the San Diego Unified Port District Master Plan on October 14, 1980. The Commission has reviewed twenty-nine amendments since that date.

**B. Contents of Port Master Plan Amendments.** California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 13656 calls for port master plan amendments to be certified in the same manner as port master plans. Section 30711 of the Coastal Act states, in part, that a port master plan shall include all the following:

- (1) The proposed uses of land and water areas, where known.
- (2) The proposed design and location of port land areas, water areas, berthing, and navigation ways and systems intended to serve commercial traffic within the area of jurisdiction of the port governing body.
- (3) An estimate of the effect of development on habitat areas and the marine environment, a review of existing water quality, habitat areas, and quantitative and qualitative biological inventories, and proposals to minimize and mitigate any substantial adverse impact.
- (4) Proposed projects listed as appealable in Section 30715 in sufficient detail to be able to determine their consistency with the policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) of this division.
- (5) Provisions for adequate public hearings and public participation in port planning and development decisions.

The Commission finds that the proposed port master plan amendment conforms to the provisions of Section 30711 of the Coastal Act. The proposed changes in land and water uses are outlined in sufficient detail in the port master plan submittal for the Commission to make a determination of the proposed amendment's consistency with the Chapter 8 policies of the Coastal Act.

The proposed amendment was the subject of a Negative Declaration under the California Environmental Quality Act. The Negative Declaration associated with the plan amendment was subject to public review and hearing and was adopted by the Board of Port Commissioners on January 22, 2001 as Resolution 2001-14. A public hearing on the proposed master plan amendment was held and the amendment was adopted by the Board of Port Commissioners on May 22, 2001 as Resolution 2001-99.

**C. Standard of Review.** Section 30710 states that Chapter 8 shall govern those portions of the San Diego Unified Port District, excluding any wetland, estuary, or existing recreation area indicated in Part IV of the Coastal Plan. The entire water area under the jurisdiction of the Port of San Diego is covered by Chapter 3 policies because San Diego Bay is mapped as an estuary and wetland in Part IV of the Coastal Plan, and on the maps adopted by the Commission pursuant to Section 30710 of the Act. The proposed Map Amendment is for a parcel of land located east of the 24<sup>th</sup> Street National

City Marine Terminal, and does not include any wetland, estuary, or recreation area. Therefore, the policies of Chapter 8 of the Coastal Act are the standard of review for the proposed amendment.

**D. Summary of Proposed Plan Amendment/History.** Since the original map adoption by the Commission, the Port of San Diego has acquired additional land located within the corporate limits of the City of National City. The land consists of a 22.14 acre parcel, currently improved with approximately 332,000 sq.ft. of warehouse and office improvements, located south of West 24<sup>th</sup> Street, between Tidelands Avenue and Harrison Avenue, at 1000-1022 West 24<sup>th</sup> Street in the City of National City. The site is east of the 24<sup>th</sup> Street National City Marine Terminal and was the subject of Boundary Map Amendment #4 approved by the Commission on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2000. The proposed PMPA is to incorporate this parcel into the Port Master Plan under the “Marine-Related Industrial” land use designation, as well as include respective changes to the land and water use tables, maps and text, under Planning District 5 of the Port Master Plan. (see Exhibit 3).

The Port has provided a history regarding the subject development that states the southwest portion of the site was undeveloped and comprised of tidelands until sometime between 1953 and 1958. The southeast portion of the site contained a portion of the historic Santa Fe Railroad Tie Treating Plant from as early as 1891 until some time between 1953 and 1958. During this time, railroad tracks traversed the remaining portions of the parcel. The structures have primarily been used for warehouse and office space since 1964 (SDUPD Draft Negative Declaration, 9/2000).

**E. Conformance with the Coastal Act.** The proposed amendment would result in changes to land use categories, and to the text and Precise Plan map contained in Planning District 5 (National City Bayfront) of the Port Master Plan. In order for the Commission to certify the proposed master plan amendment, the Commission must determine that the amendment conforms to the following applicable Chapter 8 policies of the Coastal Act:

**1. Applicable Policies**

Section 30708

All port-related developments shall be located, designed, and constructed so as to:

- (a) Minimize substantial adverse environmental impacts.
- (b) Minimize potential traffic conflicts between vessels.
- (c) Give highest priority to the use of existing land space within harbors for port purposes, including, but not limited to, navigational facilities, shipping industries, and necessary support and access facilities.

(d) Provide for other beneficial uses consistent with the public trust, including, but not limited to, recreation and wildlife habitat uses, to the extent feasible.

(e) Encourage rail service to port areas and multicompany use of facilities.

## **2. Findings for Consistency with Chapter 8 of the Coastal Act**

The project site is located in an industrial and commercially developed area in the Port Master Plan Planning District 5 on the National City bayfront, which is an established and developed marine-related industrial area. Substantial areas on the bayfront are currently used for lumber storage, manufacturing and distribution, which are dependent on proximity to the Port's deep-water wharves. Presently, under the City of National City, the project site is zoned "Medium Manufacturing/Coastal Zone". Permitted uses in this zone include light and medium manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, and distribution, research and development, etc. The site is currently developed as a light industrial facility, occupied with warehouse and office uses. The structures on the site range from 20 to 26 feet high.

The Port Master Plan contains the following description of marine-related industrial uses:

Activities suitable for the marine-related industrial area include, but are not limited to, ...warehouses, silos, fueling facilities; bulk liquid storage tanks and pipelines; shipping offices and custom facilities...

The proposed site is currently improved with approximately 332,000 sq. ft. of warehouse and office improvements, with on-site parking to meet the requirements of the development. The Plan Amendment indicates that the facilities are to remain entirely unchanged and the current use of the site is consistent with the Port Master Plan designation of "Marine-Related Industrial".

Additionally, Port property surrounding the site is mainly designated for marine-related industrial uses. The general areas to the north of the site currently consist of the U.S. Naval Station and various industrial facilities such as Reynolds Aluminum Supply Company and Georgia Pacific. The area to the south of the site currently contains Pepper Park and the Sweetwater River Channel. The National City Marine Terminal is currently located to the west of the site. The site is bounded to the northeast by railroad tracks and the Riverside Cement Company; to the west by railroad tracks and a vacant parcel; to the north by Bay Marina Drive; and to the south by railroad tracks, a lumber storage yard, and Pepper Park. Thus, the subject site with the proposed marine-related industrial designation is compatible with surrounding land uses.

Furthermore, due to its distance from the bayfront, the site cannot be used for more coastal-dependent immediate marine-related industrial activities, such as a marine terminal, container unloading, or berthing facilities. The proposal allows that the existing facilities be used for marine-related industrial activities that are appropriate for an inland site. Thus, as proposed, the National Distribution Center Port Master Plan Amendment can be found consistent with all applicable Chapter 8 policies of the Coastal Act and will not result in any foreseeable impacts to the surrounding environment.

**F. Consistency with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).**

As described above, the proposed amendment does not have the potential to result in resource damage in the form of individual or cumulative impacts to land use or sensitive resources. No significant, unmitigable environmental impacts were identified. The proposed amendment was the subject of an Environmental Impact Report under CEQA. The EIR was subject to public review and hearing and was adopted by the Board of Port Commissioners. The proposed amendment will not result in significant adverse impacts to the environment of the coastal zone and there are no feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the amendment may have on the environment. The Commission therefore finds that the amendment is consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act.